

The Renzi Report

VOL. 4 ISSUE 4

APRIL 2006

Your Direct Link to the News and Events from Our Nation's Capital and Rural Arizona

Dear Fellow Arizonan:

As Hurricanes Katrina and Rita raged through the southeastern United States last summer, much of America's energy infrastructure based in the Gulf of Mexico was damaged or destroyed, causing gas prices to soar. Now months later, our nation is still faced with rising gas prices, but this time, there is no clear cause and effect.

It is time for Big Oil to reinvest its profits into alternative and renewable fuel research and production and to specifically develop distribution systems dedicated to alternative fuels instead of providing its executives with retirement packages worth hundreds of millions of dollars.

We must shift the energy policy debate in America to an increased focus on alternative and renewable fuels. Oil supplies our nation with more than 99 percent of the fuel we use in our trucks and cars, and this leaves America's economy vulnerable to price spikes.

If we can produce more ethanol and biodiesel to help fuel our vehicles, we will create jobs, boost local economies and produce cleaner-burning fuels. This will keep dollars here at home where they can have a positive impact on our economy.

As always, feel free to tell your family members, friends and neighbors about the Renzi Report. You can sign up to receive this email and find additional information about developments in Congress at my website. Just click on the following link: <http://www.house.gov/renzi>.

If you have any questions or comments about this e-newsletter or anything else, please e-mail me at rick.renzi@mail.house.gov and I will get back to you as quickly as possible. Thank you and may God Bless America.



Rick Renzi

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Congressman Renzi welcomes Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley to Washington, D.C. recently. Congressman Renzi fought for a formula change that will help bring millions of dollars to the Navajo Nation to assist with affordable housing.

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Rural Arizona Energy Update

Renzi Calls on "Big Oil" to Invest Profits into Research and Development for Alternative and Renewable Fuels

Congressman Rick Renzi is calling on oil companies to invest their high profits into alternative fuel research to help America move toward new forms of energy. Renzi said he would support legislation that pushes oil companies to reinvest their profits into alternative and renewable fuel research and production and to specifically convert existing service stations and distribution systems dedicated to alternative fuels.

"We won't end our reliance on fossil fuels overnight, but we must invest in the research and development of alternative fuels that will someday help us become energy independent," said Congressman Renzi. "If oil companies can't do it on their own, Congress should consider legislation that increases investment of profits into alternative and renewable fuels programs."

Renzi noted that the nine major oil companies recorded an average 36.4 % increase in profits in 2005 as compared to 2004 and Exxon Mobil made \$36.1 billion last year, an increase of more than 42 percent.

Renzi noted that Brazil's alternative fuel strategy began years ago when they planted millions of acres of sugarcane with the sole purpose of using the crops to someday provide affordable, clean burning biofuel for their country. Renzi is co-sponsoring legislation (HR 4357) in the House to help America become more energy independent with specific goals that will require ten percent blend of renewable fuels in American gasoline by 2010.

"America should follow Brazil's example and plant sugarcane in the southeast where it can thrive," said Renzi.

"It will not only provide a boost to the local economies in hurricane devastated areas, it will provide homegrown American energy for the nation."

Congressman Renzi has driven a hybrid vehicle that runs on gas and electricity for more than a year and is also calling for the auto industry to develop more flex fuel vehicles like the ones in Brazil that can run on a fuel called "E-85" that is 85 percent ethanol.

Renzi Calls for New Hearings to Investigate Excessive Retirement Package of Oil Company Executives and Rising Gas Prices

Congressman Rick Renzi called for a new round of hearings as well as a Federal Trade Commission investigation into oil company profits in response to rising oil prices and reports that Exxon is providing its retiring Chairman, Lee Raymond with a retirement package, according to a story in the New York Times, worth more than \$400 million dollars. Renzi is calling for Congress to look closely at oil company profits, swelling executive salaries and the continuing rise of gas prices.

"Rising oil prices threaten to hobble America's economy," said Congressman Renzi. "And if terrorist concerns and other world events were not troubling enough, now we see the outgoing chairman of Exxon rubbing American's nose in it. This retirement package makes a mockery of Americans who are forced to pay exorbitant gas prices just to get to work."

Renzi noted that gas prices went up a whopping 40 cents last month and that the outgoing Exxon chairman's salary and bonuses meant that he was paid more than \$144,000 a day or almost \$6,000 an hour. Renzi is calling on Congress to pass meaningful alternative fuels and incentive programs to help move the U.S. away from dependence on foreign oil.

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Rural Arizona Native American Update

Renzi Fights for Formula Change to Increase Funding for Navajo Housing

The Navajo Nation will be receiving millions more for tribal housing because of a formula change championed by Congressman Rick Renzi to allow the use of expanded census data for Native American populations. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently awarded a new \$84.5 million federal grant from the Indian Housing Block Grant program to the Navajo Housing Authority. Renzi's efforts have expanded the availability of housing funds for the Navajo Nation. Previously the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had used so-called "multi-race" Census data, which shifted federal funding away from traditional tribal areas. Renzi fought against this decision because it violated HUD's own tribal consultation policy, and without the formula changes the Navajo Nation stood to lose millions in Native American federal housing grants in the administration's budget.

"Home ownership is the cornerstone of a strong community and the Navajo Nation housing programs include some of the most innovative tribal homeownership programs in the country," said Congressman Renzi. "These federal housing funds are well spent because they continue to improve the quality of life for residents of the Navajo Nation, and provide a foundation for strong and healthy communities."

Renzi's changes added an extra \$24 million to the Indian Housing Block Grant program because they allow tribes to use either single or multi race census data when applying for housing funds, depending on whatever worked best. The Navajo Nation lost more than \$10 million in recent years before the change was implemented. According to the Navajo Housing Authority, each year 2,000 get access to housing due to this funding and that the current housing estimate states that the need on the Navajo Nation is more than 20,000 housing units.

Renzi Secures \$1.8 Million Grant to Prevent Native American Student Dropouts in Rural Arizona

Congressman Rick Renzi today announced a new \$1.8 million federal grant to assist in reducing Native American student dropout rates in rural Arizona. The three year grant will be distributed to the San Carlos and White Mountain Apache Reservations to fund dropout prevention programs and is being facilitated through the Arizona Department of Education's Native American Dropout Prevention Initiative. Arizona is the only state targeting Native American populations to prevent school dropouts. The grant funding was awarded after the funding for the program was initially rejected. Congressman Renzi weighed in on the federal level and fought for the grant funding because of the high dropout rates on tribal lands.

"I hope this dropout prevention program will become a model on tribal lands across the nation," said Congressman Renzi. "But more importantly, these funds will address a growing problem by engaging young minds and giving them the tools to become successful young adults who can make positive contributions to their communities."

The goal of the program is to establish a successful model for statewide collaboration among reservation-based public school districts; tribal leaders; youth and community members; colleges; state and tribal social services and behavioral health agencies serving Native Americans. It will help decrease dropout rates, increase graduation rates, increase attendance rates, improve performance on tests and will help provide more postsecondary options for students on tribal lands. The grant specifically addresses the two public high schools on the White Mountain and San Carlos Apache Reservations. The Native American dropout rate on rural reservation public schools was over 17%, while the Arizona state dropout rate for 2003-2004 was 8.4%.

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Rural Arizona Legislative Update



Renzi Brings First Agriculture Policy Hearing to Arizona in Almost 50 Years

Congressman Rick Renzi joined members of the House Agriculture Committee in Coolidge recently to hear from Arizona producers on challenges to farming and proposed changes to federal farm policy. This was the second in a series of hearings by the committee. This was the first agriculture policy hearing in Arizona in almost 50 years and explored various aspects of the 2002 Farm Bill which is set to expire in September 2007. Congressman Renzi was instrumental in bringing the hearing to Arizona even though he is not a member of the House Agriculture Committee.

"This hearing give the Arizona farm community a stronger voice in the policy process," said Congressman Renzi. "The input given during this hearing by Arizona farmers will improve federal agricultural policy for not only Arizona, but the nation."

Agriculture is a \$6.3 billion industry for the state of Arizona. With roughly 7,300 farms and ranches throughout the state, Arizona produces a wide variety of commodities from lettuce, cotton, and hay, to beef and dairy products, among many others.

Arizona ranks second in the nation in its production of cantaloupe and honeydew melons, head and leaf lettuce, spinach, broccoli and cauliflower.

Enrollment Jumps After Renzi's Medicare Workshops Sign Seniors up for New Prescription Drug Plan

According to a new study from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, enrollment numbers in the new Medicare Prescription Drug Plan for seniors in Arizona's First District jumped eight percent after the first round of Medicare workshops planned by Congressman Rick Renzi's office and the Medicare Access Network of Arizona. The First Congressional District is leading the state in increased enrollment, while Arizona's average increase is less than four percent. Congressman Renzi's office held several meetings in Casa Grande, Florence and Coolidge in March and recently hosted workshops in Globe and Safford, Show Low, Payson, St. Johns, Holbrook, Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Flagstaff. **The deadline to sign up for the Medicare Prescription drug plan is May 15, 2006.**

"This program will help increase competition and lower prescription drug prices for our seniors," said Congressman Renzi. "The plans will be especially beneficial to seniors with low incomes."

Renzi noted the importance of convenient access to affordable prescription drugs in rural Arizona and said he supports allowing consumers, pharmacies, and wholesalers to import improved drugs from certain developed foreign countries like Canada.

"I am supporting legislation to give Americans the opportunity to purchase FDA-approved drugs at the same low cost as in Canada and other developed countries," Congressman Renzi said. "I will continue the fight for convenient access and fair pricing of prescription drugs for our seniors."

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National Security Legislative Update



The House approved an amendment offered by Congressman Rick Renzi (AZ-1) that directed the President to fully prosecute intelligence leaks to the fullest extent of the law. The amendment was added to the Intelligence Authorization Act which also passed the House of Representatives.

Renzi: Congress Sends Strong Message that President Does Have the Right to Protect National Security and Prevent Leaks of Sensitive Intelligence

The House of Representatives today reaffirmed the President's authority to classify intelligence and protect Americans in a resounding vote of 366 to 56. The House was voting on an amendment offered by Congressman Rick Renzi that also directed the President to fully prosecute intelligence leaks to the fullest extent of the law. The amendment was added to the Intelligence Authorization Act which also passed the House of Representatives.

"The vote today reaffirms the President's authority to the fullest extent of the law to protect national security information in order to keep our country safe," said Congressman Renzi.

Renzi said the media must help America win the war on terror and safeguard the nation's secrets because terrorists and those who would hurt America do not confine themselves to one country, or one border. Renzi said the President followed the letter of the law when it came to informing intelligence oversight leaders in Congress (the gang of eight) about national security and intelligence matters and Congress reaffirmed his authority on protecting intelligence in a resounding way.

Renzi said the amendment sends a strong message that former government employees or those on the verge of retirement acting with the media to disclose classified information will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

"It is never in our nation's best interest to disclose our most sensitive intelligence sources and methods to our enemies," Congressman Renzi said.

ECONOMY FAST FACTS

- 211,000 Jobs Created In March
- More than 5.1 Million New Jobs Created Since 2003
- 31 consecutive months of uninterrupted job growth
- College Graduates are Going Into the Strongest Job Market in Five Years

FAST FACTS

- Orders for durable goods rose 6.1 percent in March...
- Home sales increased 13.8 percent, the most since April 1993, to an annual rate of 1.213 million
- District One leads Arizona with a 9% increase in Medicare enrollment – the state's average increase is 5%.

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In Case You Missed It...

Act now on energy

Policy must shift to alternative fuels

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/opinions/articles/0502renzi-oil.html>

House OKs bill to swell spending on intelligence

<http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/0427intel-congress0427.html>

Renzi pushes energy research as gas prices keep climbing

<http://sanantonio.bizjournals.com/phoenix/stories/2006/04/24/daily21.html>

Funds to help fight dropout rate

http://www.silverbelt.com/articles/2006/04/26/apache_moccasin/apache02.txt

Renzi offers Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Workshop in Payson

<http://www.paysonroundup.com/section/localnews/story/23250>

Medicaid ID rules draw fire

<http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/index.php?sty=63638>

Renzi seeks investigation into gas price hikes

<http://phoenix.bizjournals.com/phoenix/stories/2006/04/17/daily7.html>

Marchers collect clout in Congress

<http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/news/articles/0412immig-whatsnext0412.html>

ERAU sponsors security symposium

<http://prescottdailycourier.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&SubSectionID=1&ArticleID=39345&TM=26330.4>

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